EVERY BALL COUNTS!

THE OLYMPIC SPIRIT BURNS BRIGHTLY IN DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD IN OCTOBER

OCTOBER 5, 2019, 3 PM
BMO HARRIS BANK CENTER
300 ELM ST; ROCKFORD, IL 61101

TICKET INFORMATION
ROCKFORDOLYMPICTRIALS.COM
815-968-3223 BOX OFFICE

2019 RKFD LOOP
Rockford’s Road to Ping Pong Supremacy

PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS

- The Olympic Spirit Burns Brightly in Downtown Rockford in October

- Kanak Jha
Team USA

- Every Ball Counts.

- Gorockford.com

CITY MARKET
CELEBRITY SMASH
Rockford’s Olympic Trials Celebrity Table Tennis Challenge

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 @ 5:30 PM
ROCKFORD CITY MARKET (INDOOR MARKET)

RALLY RKFD
Rockford’s Official Olympic Table Tennis Trials Fan Festival

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5
11 AM - 3 PM
STATE & MAIN STREETS, DOWNTOWN ROCKFORD

Food & Beverages / Recreational Table Tennis
Live Music / Ceremonial Ping Pong Ball Drop

The Rockford region is hosting its first-ever Olympic Trials—the 2019 ITTF North American Olympic Table Tennis Trials on Saturday, October 5, at BMO Harris Bank Center. In honor of this, the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) is proud to introduce the CITY MARKET CELEBRITY SMASH, an eight-round, fast-paced ping pong charity tournament. Please join us for fun and prizes and in support of Rockford’s first-ever Olympic Trials.
THE ROAD TO TOKYO
RUNS THROUGH
BMO HARRIS BANK CENTER
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2019!

International stars of men’s and women’s table tennis will invade BMO Harris Bank Center in vibrant downtown Rockford Saturday, October 5 for the first ever Olympic Trials to be held in our famously sports-centric city. Once named Sportsville USA by Sports Illustrated magazine, some say Rockford is past due for an international event of Olympic stature.

“I lived and worked in Rockford for several years,” said Gordon Kaye, Managing Director of International Table Tennis Federation. “I love the city and its fun-loving, competitive spirit. The very first thing I noticed about it when I moved there was how much Rockford loves sports and athletes. Sports are in Rockford’s DNA. So, yes; if anywhere deserves an Olympic Trials, it’s Rockford, Illinois.”

“The competition at this trials will be intense,” said Tony Kiesenhofer, ITTF North America Regional Director. “The Americans and Canadian teams will walk in together, but only one team will walk out with its passports punched for the Tokyo Olympics. There is a lot at stake. We at ITTF are so happy to bring the excitement of international table tennis to Rockford, IL. I can’t wait to see the city turn out and be blown away by the skill of the American and Canadian athletes.”

With its lightning speed, amazing eye-hand coordination and baffling spin, table tennis is an incredibly exciting sport to witness at the international level. Teams will be comprised of three athletes each (supplemented by reserves) playing best two out of three matches.

Thousands of fans are expected to attend the trials. We encourage you to plan to be a part of Rockford sports history! Single Session tickets start at $10. All Day passes start at $15.
NORTH AMERICAN OLYMPIC TABLE TENNIS TRIALS
Event Marketing Campaign of the Year | SportsETA

DIGITAL ASSETS

DIGITAL AD

DIGITAL AD

digital ad
digital ad

digital ad

digital ad

recap video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlMvy9ch68I)
NORTH AMERICAN OLYMPIC TABLE TENNIS TRIALS
Event Marketing Campaign of the Year | SportsETA

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook post

Go Rockford
Published by Andrea Cook | October 5, 2019
Wow, what an experience at the 2019 ITTF Table Tennis Trials held at the BMO Harris Bank Center! Congratulations to the women of Team USA who will advance to the NBC Olympics in Tokyo! Now let's watch the men compete next. Good luck! #RockfordOlympicTrials #BYG2RKFD #GoRockford

Like | Comment | Share
1 Comment 2 Shares

Twitter post

Rockford CVB @gorockford | Sep 23, 2019
Let's hear a BIG CONGRATULATIONS to our City Market Celebrity SMASH winner @OwensPelestar! With his awesome ping pong skills and incredible outfit, Dan rose up our winners! Thank you to all that participated last Friday! We had a blast! 🎾 #RockfordOlympicTrials

Like | Comment | Share
3 9

Instagram post

gorockford
BMO Harris Bank Center

View Insights

Like by rdarockford and 54 others

gorockford Congratulations to both the Men's and Women's USA Table Tennis teams for continuing on to the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, Japan!! 😊 The competition was fierce and the stakes were high, but both teams rose to the challenge and we feel honored to have cheered them on! Thank you to @usatabletennis and @tabletennisca for bringing your game to RKFD! 🏆🏆 #RockfordOlympicTrials #BYG2RKFD @ittfworld

October 8, 2019
NORTH AMERICAN OLYMPIC TABLE TENNIS TRIALS

Event Marketing Campaign of the Year | SportsETA

PRE-EVENTS
As part of its event diversification and organizational brand awareness strategies, RACVB successfully attracted and hosted the first-ever Olympic Trials in Rockford last year—the 2019 International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) North American Olympic Table Tennis Trials. That success was due to a comprehensive event marketing campaign that leveraged traditional and nontraditional platforms spanning from the early stages of the bid process through the event’s completion.

By building a multi-faceted marketing campaign for the 2019 ITTF North American Olympic Table Tennis Trials, RACVB reached a varied audience that included visitors, residents, sports enthusiasts, event operators and rights holders, corporate bases and other influencers in the region. Additionally, the sport of table tennis and the connection to the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympic Games—as referenced as a campaign centerpiece, the road to the Tokyo Games literally went through Rockford—provided RACVB access to new audiences regionally, nationally and internationally. RACVB targeted Madison and Milwaukee, WI, and Chicago with digital and billboard placements as a strategic effort to reach communities that have a vast table tennis fan and player base. Moreover, the ITTF and USA Table Tennis partnership accessed millions of viewers as the Trials were streamed to international audiences via the two entities’s global platforms.

While centering on this being Rockford’s first-ever Olympic Trials, RACVB’s goals included: diversifying its event portfolio; building brand awareness by hosting an international event; fostering community pride by engaging locals in a series of free public events that enhanced engagement and built positive brand perception among residents; garnering earned media nationally and internationally; reaching our sports tourism target audiences including trade publications and event operators; refining and enhancing our event productions expertise; and growing relationships locally with municipal and corporate partners to grow opportunities for future tourism programming support.

The marketing campaign’s creative process began when RACVB incorporated a complete marketing plan and timeline into the contract addendum between the ITTF and host venue (BMO Harris Bank Center). That creative process began by hiring an advertising firm to design the Trials event logo and accompanying branding elements as the foundation for a campaign. Thereafter, RACVB created a digital agenda positioning GoRockford.com—including the dedicated RockfordOlympicTrials.com microsite—as the Trials go-to source for information by leveraging RACVB social channels (including organic and boosted posts across its Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube channels) and static and video ads in strategic markets (Rockford, Chicago, Madison, Milwaukee primarily) from September 9-October 4, 2019. Moreover, RACVB used dedicated Facebook event pages for the two Trials sessions and six community activation events that led to the Trials.

In addition to a hefty online presence, GoRockford sent six eblasts to stakeholders, citizens, media and marketing partners, and created corporate mailers that were sent to more than 6,000 area businesses to foster event awareness and attendance. RACVB also negotiated in-kind and paid advertising in print (Rockford Register Star, The Rock River Times, Northwest Quarterly), radio (Townsquare Media, Mid-west Family Broadcasting), television (WREX, WTVO, WQRF, WIFR), and Lamar Advertising outdoor placements in the Rockford, Chicago, Madison, WI, and Milwaukee areas. Other traditional marketing components included...
event signage, banners, posters, flyers, window wraps and additional creative to complement the event’s presentation inside of BMO Harris Bank Center.

RACVB’s Olympic Trials marketing activations included curating the RKFD Loop, a recreational local tournament that culminated in rec players competing for the official city championship. The RKFD Loop featured four restaurant/bars in the Rockford region during the month of September, which ended with two local rec players vying for city championship supremacy on the official court as part of the Oct. 5 Olympic Trials production. In addition to engaging recreational players, RACVB created the City Market Celebrity Smash to drive media awareness around the first-ever Olympic Trials in the city. The Smash included eight local celebrities as part of Rockford City Market, a weekly street festival that draws 6,000+ attendees each week. All Rockford and regional media attended and covered the Smash, contributing significantly to the tourism narrative as it relates to the Trials. The final in-market marketing activation was dubbed Rally RKFD, the official pre-Trials community celebration on the morning of Oct. 5 Trials. Rally RKFD featured food and beverage, live music, bounce houses, recreational table tennis and a giant drop of 700 Olympic Trials branded ping pong balls to ceremonially kick off the Trials at BMO Harris Bank Center.

By blending its marketing mix between visitor and resident audiences, RACVB maximized the campaign’s effectiveness and reach, drove visitors to Rockford and enhanced RACVB’s brand awareness as a local, regional and national tourism authority. The below data indicates the success of RACVB’s holistic event marketing campaign:

- Digital campaign (Sept 9-Oct 4) metrics including 1,752,719 digital display impressions, 196,571 digital pre-roll impressions, and average click-through rates of 0.28% in Milwaukee, Madison and Chicago suburbs.
- Total event attendance (Trials, RKFD Loop, City Market Celebrity Smash and Rally RKFD) of 2,500.
- Total media reach of 4,387,647.
- Out-of-market digital campaign reach of 1,949,290.
- 1,706,823 outdoor/billboard impressions.
- $434,272 of business direct tourism sales.
- $40,585.73 generated in total media average ad value.
- A click-through rate of 3.84 for paid search, outperforming the industry standard by two times.
- ROI Sources: Destinations International, GrahamSpencer, Lamar Advertising Company, Meltwater and Simpleview.